

Message Text

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ORIGIN L-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 INR-07 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 OES-03 SP-02

SS-15 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 H-02 /079 R

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P R 130225Z MAR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 061189

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, UN, UR

SUBJECT: UN OUTER SPACE ISSUES; NEW SOVIET POLICY
INITIATIVES

1. DURING US-SOVIET BILATERALS ON UN OUTER SPACE POLITICAL
AND LEGAL ISSUES HELD IN LONDON FEBRUARY 19-20, SOVIETS
DESCRIBED TO US A NEW INITIATIVE THEY ARE CONSIDERING IN
THE REMOTE SENSING AREA. THIS INITIATIVE, WHICH COULD HAVE
SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL AND MILITARY IMPLICATIONS, WOULD IN
ESSENCE PROPOSE THAT DATA BELOW A CERTAIN RESOLUTION BE
FREE FROM DISSEMINATION RESTRICTIONS AND THAT DATA WITH A
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RESOLUTION HIGHER THAN, FOR EXAMPLE, 30 METERS BE SUBJECT

TO THE PRIOR CONSENT OF THE SENSED COUNTRY BEFORE IT IS PUBLICLY DISSEMINATED. THIS PROPOSAL IS OUTLINED IN MORE DETAIL IN THE US DELEGATION REPORT, A COPY OF WHICH WAS POUCHED TO ADDRESSEE.

2. ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS CLEARLY INTEND TO INTRODUCE THIS PROPOSAL AT THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE SESSION IN GENEVA IN MAY, WE ARE SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN FROM OUR DISCUSSIONS WHETHER THEY ALSO INTEND TO RAISE IT AT THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE IN GENEVA MARCH 22-APRIL 9. THE EMBASSY IS THEREFORE REQUESTED TO PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO BORIS MAJORSKY AT THE MFA.

3. BEGIN TEXT: AT FIRST REVIEW WE SEE SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN AN APPROACH ON REMOTE SENSING SUCH AS THAT SUGGESTED BY THE SOVIET DELEGATION AT OUR RECENT BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS. IT RAISES MANY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AND IF POSSIBLE WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE FURTHER BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS BEFORE THE IDEA IS PUT FORWARD IN THE UN. ITS INITIAL PRESENTATION COULD OF COURSE HAVE SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON THE DIRECTION OF THE SUBSEQUENT DEBATE.

WE MUST OF COURSE STUDY THE PROPOSAL IN DEPTH, A TASK WHICH UNFORTUNATELY WE CANNOT COMPLETE IN TIME FOR THIS YEAR'S SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE SOVIET DELEGATION MIGHT SHARE OUR VIEW OF THE DESIRABILITY OF FURTHER BILATERAL CONTACTS, AND HENCE THAT PRESENTATION OF THE SOVIET INITIATIVE MIGHT BE DEFERRED UNTIL WE HAVE HAD TIME TO COMPLETE OUR REVIEW AND TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER ON A BILATERAL BASIS. END TEXT.

4. FYI: WE WISH IF POSSIBLE TO AVOID THE IMPRESSION OF GREAT USG CONCERN ABOUT THE SOVIET INITIATIVE, BUT WE WOULD CLEARLY PREFER THAT THEY DELAY ITS PRESENTATION. WE CONSIDER THE INITIATIVE TO BE OF CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY WITH POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR SPACE PROGRAMS. WE CANNOT SPECIFY A TIME WHEN WE WILL BE READY, BUT WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH A PROMPT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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SERIOUS REVIEW. END FYI.

5. PLEASE REPORT SOVIET REACTION BY IMMEDIATE. INGERSOLL

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